



Written by [Staff](#) on May 9, 2016

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## **Exercising the Right**

### **Disabled Vet Defends Home**

WTOC News reported out of Savannah, Georgia, on March 30 that a mobile home was invaded by two suspects who initially claimed they were police officers. The resident, Lam Blake, was awakened by the sound of someone breaking in to his house. Blake is a handicapped veteran who lives alone. He told authorities that he has a surveillance camera, which showed him the two people as they tried to gain entrance to his home. They yelled out that they were police officers, but he could see from the video that they weren't.

Blake also said that he kept two guns by his bed. "I immediately grabbed my 9 mil Smith and Wesson M&P, loaded it up, and waited for them to come all the way in," he told WTOC News. Holding his firearm, he was prepared when the armed intruders entered his bedroom. "When I saw them coming in, like I said, I was waiting for them to come, and I had something for them." Both suspects fired at Blake, and he returned fire, causing the two assailants to flee, which Blake described to the media as cowardly.

Blake sang the praises of being armed for self-defense and told WTOC that all law-abiding citizens should consider carrying a gun. "This gun saved my life. Without this gun, I might not be here right now," said Blake. "My gun saved my life, yes it did."

### **Son Avoids Father's Fate**

The ABC affiliate in Chicago reported on March 24 about a strange story that involved a man being victimized in the same type of crime that claimed his father's life more than 50 years earlier. The man's father was killed in a home invasion when a burglar shot the defenseless man and left him to die in his own home. The son, Anthony Tate, who is now 54 years old, was at his elderly mother's home when a similar break-in occurred. Tate's mother, Bertha Tate, 88, told reporters that she has kept a loaded gun accessible for self-defense ever since her husband was killed in 1962. Anthony was sitting in a chair in the front room of the apartment when someone began trying to break through the front window. Fortunately, his mother's loaded .22-caliber revolver was kept under the cushion of the chair where Anthony was sitting. As soon as Anthony saw the man trying to climb in through the window, he fired the revolver and struck the suspect. The injured burglar fled the scene but was located near the apartment building by arriving authorities. The burglar was suffering from a gunshot wound to his arm and was taken to a medical facility for treatment.

Bertha recounted the harrowing details of the crime and shooting to ABC7. "I heard the gunshot ... and then my son called me, 'Momma, somebody tried to break in the window.'" Bertha explained that living in a high-crime neighborhood for decades has been tragic for her, as she has also lost several of her siblings and children to violent crimes. Bertha was grateful for the way her son acted. "My son said he wasn't going to let that somebody come in that window. He knew those boys came in the house and killed his father. He wasn't going to let somebody come in the house and kill me," Bertha told ABC7. Bertha also told ABC7 that the intruder is lucky that it wasn't her doing the shooting because she would have shot the suspect "through the window and hit him in the chest."



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## Seniors Flock to the Gun Range

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on March 29 about a sharp increase in senior citizens seeking firearm training. The story featured a senior center in Austintown, Ohio, a suburb of Youngstown, that listed shooting among the different activities available at the site. The center began offering shooting as an activity on a monthly basis after some senior citizens expressed interest in it a few months ago. The dozen or so participants are mostly in their 60s and 70s, and fire at paper targets that are hung in a room with cinder-block walls. Sixty-three-year-old Phyllis Engler told the *Wall Street Journal* that even though she has arthritis in her shoulder, which makes holding a pistol difficult, she said she thinks she can work around it with a little practice. Engler hopes to buy a pistol and apply for a concealed-carry permit, and warned any would-be criminals that “they better not mess with the women of Austintown.” Data from the National Rifle Association revealed that nearly 23,000 people over 65 took basic firearm training courses from NRA-certified instructors in 2015, and that is four times the number of five years earlier, which makes that age category one of the fastest growing.

The *Wall Street Journal* also reported on a gun store in Bay City, Michigan, owned by Glenn Duncan. Duncan agreed that seniors make up a growing segment of his customers, now making up nearly one-third of his customers, as compared to being 10 percent five years ago. What is driving this changing demographic? Duncan explained, “Life has changed. Law enforcement agencies can’t protect everyone.”

Many dealers from around the nation attribute changing gun-ownership demographics to older people who say their personal safety is their main concern. Rex Gore, owner of Black Wing Shooting Center in Delaware, Ohio, explained that being capable with a firearm gives older people “a sense of security and safety.... It’s a great equalizer in this crazy world we live in.”

The *Wall Street Journal* further explained that demand by seniors is one of the factors causing the surge in the U.S. gun business. Sales for Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation, one of the biggest U.S. gun makers, have jumped 62 percent in the quarter that ended on January 31, and its stock price has more than doubled in the past year.

Back at the senior center in Austintown, 69-year-old widow Mary Hanick, who is confined to a wheelchair, said she almost backed out of participating since she “was scared to death.” She did eventually end up participating and made four shots through the center of a paper target that featured the outline of a man. “Once I started, I calmed down a bit,” Hanick told the *Washington Post*, adding that she was going to take her hole-filled target home with her. “I’ll probably frame it,” she told the newspaper.

— Patrick Krey



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